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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 001709

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PINS](#) [MOPS](#) [MARR](#) [TU](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: TURKEY/IRAQ: MOVING TOWARD APPROVAL OF U.S. OVERFLIGHTS

(U) Classified by Ambassador W.R. Pearson; reasons: 1.5 (b,d).

11. (C) In separate meetings March 17-18, ruling AK party parliamentary group deputy chairman Salih Kapusuz; former President Demirel's right-hand-man Muharrem Ozguven; Director General of Turkish Customs (and AK party member) Nevzat Saygilioglu; and Faruk Demir, executive director of a think-tank with deep contacts in the Presidency and Prime Ministry, told us the GOT intends to have parliament pass an Iraq operation-related resolution March 19 or 20. Demir told us afternoon March 18 that, based on his conversations with the Prime Ministry, the Cabinet will consider three draft resolutions evening March 18:

(a) same text as the resolution permitting U.S. land deployment and Turkish forces' deployment abroad which failed a parliamentary vote March 1;

(b) a text granting the U.S. air corridors and uses of bases (no ground deployment) plus Turkish deployment abroad;

(c) a text granting the U.S. air corridors only plus Turkish deployment abroad.

In emphasizing that there is a new sense of fear and urgency in the AK leadership, Demir told us his Prime Ministry sources say the choice will be (b) or (c).

12. (C) When we called on Kapusuz March 18 he was about to chair an AK parliamentary group meeting to discuss the draft resolution. His group's M.P.s remain under strong pressure from constituents to oppose cooperation with the U.S., Kapusuz asserted. He therefore angled for the U.S. to give him a trump card by bringing the \$6 billion economic package back to the table ("without re-opening it," he hastily tried to add). March 17 General Director of Customs Saygilioglu also pressed us to make a gesture by putting the economic package back in play. Without commenting on the package we told both interlocutors that Washington is looking only at what action the GOT will take.

13. (U) We understand Kapusuz focused the AK M.P.s attention on the need to pass a resolution; the content is not important, he reportedly said, but a resolution is essential. Following the AK group meeting Kapusuz declared publicly that there will be no group decision on the vote; as during the failed March 1 vote on a broader land-deployment resolution, AK M.P.s will be free to vote as they wish. Main opposition CHP leader Baykal, whose gratuitous opposition to cooperation with the U.S. on Iraq has set a new benchmark for mendacity, has also announced that he is freeing his M.P.s from the previous group decision to oppose any resolution.

14. (C) Comment: In AK party circles, talk has often been cheap, as we have frequently seen. The cabinet may be flirting with options that would enable Turkey to try to persuade the U.S. to reinstate the full economic, political, and military package. If so, they may/may now be moving for three reasons: (a) the military operation is virtually certain; (b) the TGS has spoken out -- twice now; and (c) the markets are headed for real instability.

PEARSON